

# START

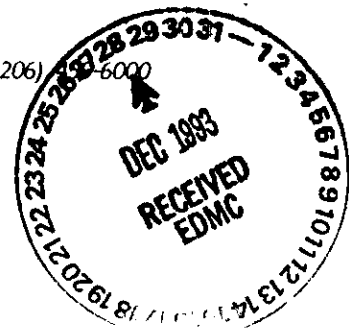


STATE OF WASHINGTON

## DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Mail Stop PV-11 • Olympia, Washington 98504-8711 • (206) 438-6000

April 17, 1992



Interested Members of the Public

Dear Member of the Public:

You are one of the many people who provided us with comments on the draft Hanford Facility-Wide Waste Permit. As such, we wanted to keep you up to date on what has been happening with one of the major issues on that permit; specifically, the Hazardous Waste Vitrification Plant.

Ecology received more than 700 comments from organizations and individuals about the draft permit. Since then Ecology staff have been reviewing issues raised and modifying the permit as appropriate.

An important issue associated with the permit is the initial Hanford Waste Vitrification Plant (HWVP) construction activities. The Vitrification Plant construction must start in April of 1992 in order to meet the December 1999 startup date. The Vitrification Plant is an essential part of the overall cleanup of hazardous waste at the Hanford site. It is the most technologically sound solution for long-term disposal of the high-level radioactive waste at the site.

The Vitrification Plant can be constructed under an exception to the interim status reconstruction rule as allowed in both state and federal regulation. These provisions allow construction as necessary to comply with an interim status corrective action order, such as the Tri-Party Agreement. Interim status allows the construction of the Vitrification Plant to begin now. The HWVP will ultimately receive a final status permit, which will first be subject to public comment.

In order to insure that the Vitrification Plant construction and operation stay on schedule, the Department of Ecology on April 13, 1992, issued a notice to the U.S. Department of Energy allowing construction of the Vitrification Plant to begin under interim status. The remainder of the permit will continue to be modified in response to public comment. If the modifications are deemed substantive enough, then the permit may go out for an additional round of public review.

If you have any questions concerning this decision, please call me at (206) 438-7021.

Sincerely,

David B. Jansen, P.E.  
Hanford Project Manager  
Nuclear and Mixed Waste Management Program

DBJ:jr